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SUBJECT: UN OVERSIGHT: FIFTH COMMITTEE ADOPTS JIU RESOLUTION
REF: A. 2005 SECSTATE 185998

B. EMAILS BETWEEN HWARD-KSHAH

11. SUMMARY: On April 11, 2006, the Fifth Committee adopted a resolution on the Joint Inspection Unit's (JIU) annual report for 2004 and program of work for 2005 and 2006. The Committee also considered a note by the President of the General Assembly (PGA) on revised procedures for appointing JIU inspectors, but due to opposition from Russia and the G77, did not take action on the note. The resolution was the subject of long and sometimes contentious discussions, in particular with regard to the JIU's report on oversight and the proposed new election procedures. The General Assembly is expected to adopt the Fifth Committee's recommendation (A/60/748) during the week of May 8th. END SUMMARY.

12. The General Assembly, as indicated in resolution 59/267, will conduct a review of efforts to reform the Unit at its sixty-first session. The current resolution, despite lack of agreement on the PGA's suggestion for improving the election process for JIU inspectors, made some interim progress on furthering reform. The resolution requested the JIU to submit its program of work earlier in the calendar year and requested the JIU to strengthen and quantify implementation of its recommendations.

13. Oversight lacunae report: The Committee's program of work for 2005 indicated that it would produce a report reviewing the oversight mechanisms of the UN system. USDel, per reftel A and ref B, submitted language requesting the JIU to stop its work on this report, in light of the language in the Outcome Document requesting an external evaluation of the UN's oversight and governance framework. This language met with great resistance by the G77 and led to a number of contentious discussions on the JIU's independence and the Outcome Document. The G77 also submitted a number of paragraphs regarding the need for the JIU to have budgetary independence, the role of the CPC in reviewing the Unit's budget and reaffirming the importance of the JIU.

14. Due to a lack of time in the main session, the Committee ended up deferring this item until the first resumed session. When discussions resumed, the oversight lacunae report was in the final stages of being completed. USDel agreed to withdraw the U.S. proposal if other delegations would also withdraw their proposals related to the oversight lacunae report. The G77 agreed to withdraw its other problematic paragraphs (noted above), however it wanted to maintain language that looked forward to GA consideration of the oversight lacunae report. The Committee eventually agreed to language that simply reaffirmed language from resolution 50/233 requesting the SG to "take the necessary measures to ensure that the thematic reports of the Unit are listed under the appropriate substantive agenda items of the work programmes of the General Assembly."

15. Election procedures: As requested in resolution 59/267,

the President of the General Assembly submitted a suggestion for making the procedures for electing JIU inspectors more efficient. The PGA's note outlined a procedure that would shorten the current election cycle for JIU inspectors from over two years to one calendar year, working within the confines of the JIU statute, as requested. The PGA's approach would likely have only minimal impact on the quality of inspectors, but was a step towards improving the efficiency of the election process. As in the past, Russia opposed even this modest step, objecting to the Secretariat having any say over what inspectors are deemed qualified and to the shortened election cycle, stating that under the PGA's proposal, if an inspector was deemed unqualified, Member States would not have enough time to find a new candidate. The G77 was in agreement with the Russian position and in the end the Committee could only agree to revert to the issue at the sixty-first session.

16. Program of work and implementation of JIU recommendations: During discussions in the main session, the U.S. and other Western delegations indicated a desire to see the JIU's program of work earlier in the year, rather than at the end of the year when all of its work had essentially been concluded. Based on these comments, the JIU took the initiative to submit a conference room paper during the resumed session with an advance version of the Unit's 2006 program of work. The Committee agreed to language that requested that the Unit's program of work (or an advance version) always be submitted to the General Assembly at its first resumed session. The resolution also included language that requests the JIU to work with participating organizations to strengthen the follow-up of the implementation of its recommendations and to include more information on the cost savings, productivity and efficiency gains associated with implementation of its recommendations in its annual report.

BOLTON